

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 2/14/89 BY SP1AG/jac

File No. 100-15433-1A.1

Date Received 4-2-58

From PASSPORT OFFICE  
(Name of Contributor)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
(Address of Contributor)

By [REDACTED] **b7c**  
(Name of Special Agent)

To Be Returned Yes ( )  
No (X)

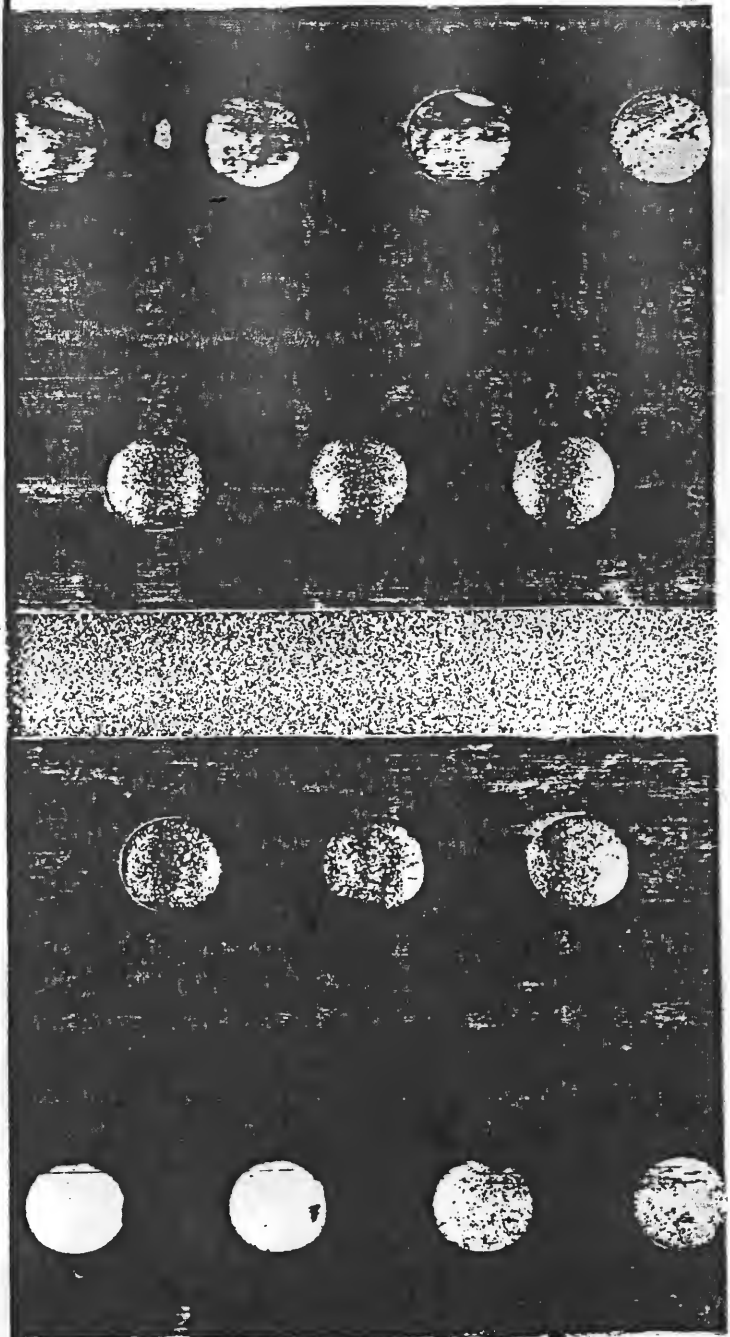
Description:

~~PHOTO~~ OF RICHARD

WRIGHT [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] **b7c**

(1)  
10142

WRIGHT, R. 53



ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 2/14/89 BY SP1AG/jac



WRIGHT, R. 54

0187

**Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice**

**COMPLAINT FORM**

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 2/14/89 BY SP1AG/jce

RICHARD WRIGHT  
Subject's Name and Aliases

C324  
Name of Complainant

Address of Complainant

Press of Subject  
Security Matter - C  
Character of Case

Telephone Number of Complainant  
1-24-44

Date and Time Complaint Received

TS OF COMPLAINT:

No main file on subject, but see following  
references:

(If additional space needed use reverse side)

ON RECOMMENDED BY AGENT:

Open case

**DISPOSITION BY SAC**

Open New Case:

Assign to Agent

Assign to P.D.

Defer

Route to Agent

No Action Necessary:

File In

Special Agent

Special Agent in Charge or  
Supervisor

WRIGHT, R. 56

185

XXXXXX  
XXXXXX  
XXXXXXFEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET2-

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- ☐ Information pertained only to a third party. Your name is listed in the title only.
- ☐ Documents originated with another Government agency(ies). These documents were referred to that agency(ies) for review and direct response to you.

Pages contain information furnished by another Government agency(ies). You will be advised by the FBI as to the releasability of this information following our consultation with the other agency(ies).

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☐ For your information: \_\_\_\_\_

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WRIGHT, R. 55

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 X NO DUPLICATION FEE X  
 X FOR THIS PAGE X  
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## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SAC, WFO (100-15433)

DATE: 3/6/58

FROM : SA [REDACTED]

**b7c**SUBJECT: RICHARD WRIGHT  
SM-C  
(OO:NY)ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 2/14/89 BY SP1AG/jac

On 3/6/58, the Passport Officer, Dept. of State, made available the subject's passport file. It indicated the subject was born 9/4/08 at Natchez, Miss.

The file had Thermofax copies of FBI reports by the WFO and New York offices.

The subject, on 2/13/58, executed an affidavit in which he admitted CP membership from 1932 to 1942. He is in Paris, France at the present time.

It is suggested that the subject's case be opened and assigned in order that all pertinent information may be obtained. The file is now available.

*RIO + Aarnu*

100-15433-5

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR - 7 1958	
FBI - WFO	

**b7c**

WRIGHT, R. 59

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER  
DIRECTOR

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice  
Washington, D. C.

100-157464

January 20, 1943

Special Agent in Charge  
New York, New York

RE: RICHARD WRIGHT  
INTERNAL SECURITY - SEDITION

Dear Sir:

The Bureau desires that it be advised as to  
the exact status of this case at the present time.

Very truly yours,

*J. E. Hoover*

John Edgar Hoover  
Director

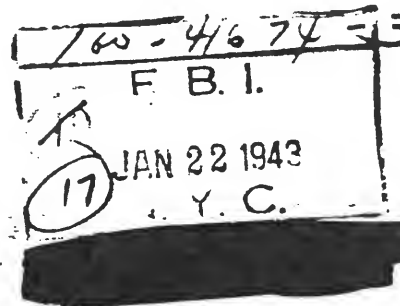
ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289-582  
DATE 12-19-88 BY OPLA/32

FOR DEFENSE



*Admiral Ben. Case assigned  
report will be submitted  
as soon as possible*

b7c



b7c

WRIGHT, R. 60



WRIGHT, Richard  
New York City

(CONFIDENTIAL)  
(Evaluation TRUE)

3ND

Subject's name appears on a list of  
sponsors of the Citizens' Non-Partisan  
Committee to elect Benjamin J. DAVIS, Jr.,  
Communist Party candidate for the New York  
City Council from Manhattan.

ONI-FBI-MID 25C  
11-15-43

Copy for B7-A

B7-CP

FBI  
b2, b7C

(num refs)

Declassified/.....  
Auth: COMNISC  
Date: 2-10-89 Unit: OOJ

100-41674-1116

NOV 30 1943
N. Y. C.
ROUTED TO

FBI  
b7C

WRIGHT, R. 61

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882  
DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 AGJ/C

*Richard Wright*

Richard Wright

100-41674-12
F. B. I.
MAY 9 1944
N. Y. C.
ROUTED TO: [REDACTED]

b7c

WRIGHT, R. 62



**Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice**

234 U. S. Court House  
Foley Square  
New York, 7, New York

100-41674

June 3, 1944

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1A GJC

Dear Sir:

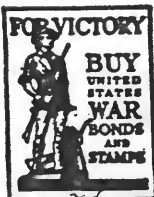
In connection with an investigation being conducted by this Bureau it is requested

Please refer to our file No. 100-41674,  
when forwarding to this office:

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

E. E. CONROY  
Special Agent in Charge



WRIGHT, R. 63

100-41674-12

93

PITTSBURGH COURIER

AUGUST 5, 1944 EDITION

It took Richard Wright, "Native Son" fame, from 1933 to 1944 to discover that Communists are "narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened at new ideas which don't fit into their own." He has also discovered at this late date a "lamentable regression" in the Reds position on the American Negro. The story is told in the August Atlantic Monthly. Their militancy on the Negro has vanished, he charges.

\*\*\*

ALL THIS WAS obvious to honest, alert minds from the beginning. As agents of a foreign government, secretly committed to the overthrow of American institutions, the Reds are only loyal to Stalin and his Asiatic Tammany. They dumped the Scottsboro racket when it was no longer profitable, abandoned the "Black and White" film to speed U. S. recognition and have now soft-pedaled agitation for equal rights because it might interfere with the war effort. They have double-crossed everybody.

\*\*\*

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882  
DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 AG/SC

AUG 8-1944

b7c

100-2676-1

WRIGHT, R. 66

10

# Reds All Wrong Wright Quits 'Em

If took a long time for Richard Wright to leave the Communist Party.

Where, until recently, he was one of the high priests of the Communist Party staunchly defending Red ideology as the only possible political philosophy for his race, today he was hurling epithets at his former Communist comrades.

"Bigoted! Intolerant! Narrow-minded!" were a few of the choicest labels applied to all Communists by the author of "Native Son" and other books.

## REDS LIVE A LIE.

Wright's abrupt about-face from the left to the right was revealed in an article written for the August "Atlantic Monthly" under the title of "I Tried to Be a Communist."

Elaborating on the article Wright discussed why he "took a walk" on the Communist Party back in 1940 after discovering that the Reds live a lie to their ideals.

At the same time Wright advised all members of his race to take a walk with him. He described the Communist Party position on the American Negro as a "lamentable regression" and declared that the "militancy on the Negro question has passed into the hands of right-wing Negroes."

## "HAVE LOT TO LEARN.

"I do not regard the Communists today as effective instruments for social change," Wright said. "The Communists have a terrible lot to learn about people."

"Communists peculiarly are too much the victims of the very society they are trying to change. This too often finds expression in intolerance and narrowness. And I mean general intolerance in an imperious way of working."

"What it amounts to is that they are narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own, whether these ideas are right or wrong."

"They tried to tell me how I should react as a Communist," he said. "But our attitudes were irreconcilable."

Wright got an idea of what Communists think of "racial equality" in 1935 when he attended a Communist party writers' congress in Carnegie Hall. Wright had come on from Chicago by hitchhiking with several members of his race.

"I asked about housing accommodations and all white members of the Communist Party looked embarrassed," he said.

100-41674  
yf

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1ABJG  
289882

- Mr. Conroy
- Mr. Wland
- Mr. Crowl
- Mr. Doyle
- Mr. B. C. Brown
- Mr. Charters
- Mr. Gertie
- Mr. Granville
- Mr. Kirkland
- Mr. Liska
- Mr. Ma
- Mr. Oshoroff
- Mr. Stangor
- Mr. Tark
- Training DA

Communist called another white Communist to one said and discussed what should be done to get me, a black Chicago Communist, housed."

One of the white Communists went out and returned "frantic-eyed and sweating" to announce he had had no luck.

"I'm going to call someone I know," he said, desperately. "Say, how about a nickel for the phone?"

Wright, disgusted, resolved to keep standing up on the sidewalk until, he said a white woman Communist took pity on him and took him to her home where she introduced him to her husband.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

AUG 2 1944

CLIPPING FROM THE  
N. Y. JOURNAL  
JUL 28 1944  
DATED  
FORWARDED BY N. Y. DIVISION

67C

# Office Memorandum

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO: SAC, NEW YORK  
FROM: SAC, WASHINGTON  
SUBJECT: RICHARD WRIGHT  
SECURITY MATTER - C

It has come to the attention of this office that an article written by the above-named subject appears in the August issue of the Atlantic Monthly magazine. It is said that this article relates WRIGHT's joining the Communist Party and his subsequent resignation from it. In this connection, it has also been noted that in the column "The World Today," by GEORGE S. SCHUYLER, appearing in the August 5, 1944, edition of the Pittsburgh Courier, there are two paragraphs with regard to WRIGHT's article in the Atlantic Monthly.

This information is being furnished to you for whatever value it may have and a clipping from the Pittsburgh Courier, as mentioned above, is being enclosed for your further information.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882  
DATE 12/27/88 BY DP/AGSC

100-15433  
Encl.

100-41679-22  
1  
AUG 8 - 1944

b7c  
Searched  
Serialized  
Indexed  
Filed

WRIGHT, R. 67

## Negro Author Criticizes Reds As Intolerant

Wright, Discussing His Own  
Break With Communists,  
Says Party Fears New Ideas

The Communist position on the American Negro has undergone a "distinct and lamentable regression" in recent years, Richard Wright, Negro author and former party member, said here yesterday in describing Communists as "narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own."

Mr. Wright's remarks were prompted by questions growing out of an article which he has written for "The Atlantic Monthly" for August under the title of "Tried to Be a Communist."

In this article, the author of "Native Son" and other books discusses his earliest experiences as a Communist party member in Chicago, touching on the problems he faced in trying to present his own ideas to the party.

The August "Atlantic Monthly" describes the article as the first of two installments and Mr. Wright said yesterday that he would not discuss the specific details of his Chicago break with the Communists because these will be covered in the second magazine article.

Mr. Wright said that his Communist party membership covered the period, roughly, from the latter part of 1932 or early 1933 to 1940. His early association with the Communists in Chicago, he said, was broken in 1937, when he was "ejected" from the party.

On the outs with the party from about May until August, 1937, Mr. Wright said that he was re-initiated in New York in 1937 and "maintained a relationship" with the party until 1940 when, he said, he left the party.

Discussing what he described as the "lamentable regression" in the Communist party position on the American Negro, Mr. Wright said that he does not know the reason for this.

"Publicly," he said, "Communists will deny that there is any substantial change in their militancy but privately they offer any handy excuse. The militancy on the Negro question has passed into the hands of right-wing Negroes. That was not true eight years ago. Most of the battles then were led by Communists."

In answer to the question of what caused the Chicago split between him and the Communists, Mr. Wright said:

"It was an accumulation of many things—not so much a leaving as an ejection over a difference of opinion. I had my way of expressing my conception of Negro experience in my writing. I thought it would be of value to them. They had their ideas of how I should react as a Communist. There was an irreconcilable gap between our attitudes."

Mr. Wright said that "I do not regard the Communists today as effective instruments for social change" and observed that "the Communists have a terrible lot to learn about people."

"Communists," he added, "peculiarly are too much the victims of the very society they are trying to change. This too often finds expression in intolerance and narrowness. I mean, general intolerance, in an imperious way of working."

"What it amounts to is that they are narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own, whether these ideas are right or wrong."

b2, b7c

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DATE 12/22/88 BY DP/AG/SC

CLIPPING FROM THE  
N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE  
JUL 28 1944

DATED  
FORWARDED BY N. Y. DIVISION

100-41674-26

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WRIGHT, R. 67

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NY 100-41674-32 pg 2

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WEIGER, R. 72

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X NO DUPLICATION FEE X  
X FOR THIS PAGE X  
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b7c

New York, New York  
January 2, 1944

MEMORANDUM

Re: VITO MARANTONIO  
INTERNAL SECURITY (C)

In a tribute to ANNA HANDE, former secretary of the International Labor Defense, appearing in the form of a pamphlet entitled "Equal Justice and Democracy in the Service of Victory" published in September 1944 by the I. L. D., the following individuals were listed as officers and members of the national committee of the I. L. D. These individuals listed below are all located in New York City.

[REDACTED]

b2, b7c

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882  
DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 AGJC

National committee members

[REDACTED]

b2, b7c

FBI
NOV 25 1944
N. Y. C.
ROUTED TO [REDACTED]

b7c

WRIGHT, R 73

100-41674-32 204



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NY 100-41674-34

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WRIGHT, R. 74

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10-10-74

b7c

100-41674 ✓

Special Agent

WRIGHT, R. 75

## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SAC, New York

FROM : John Edgar Hoover - Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

SUBJECT: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT  
SECURITY MATTER - C

DATE: May 7, 1945

100-41674

F.B.I.

MAY 8 - 1945

N.Y.C.

FILE

Reference is made to your letter of April 17, 1945, in the above captioned matter.

In view of the militant attitude of the subject toward the Negro problem, as set forth in your letter of February 26, 1945, it is believed that you should submit a recommendation for the preparation of a Security Index Card in this case.

You may consider this letter as the Bureau's approval of such a recommendation and you should place a Security Index Card in your files at this time.

5-18-45  
Card made + placed in Security Index.  
Richard Nathaniel Wright - Native Born - Communist  
Int. C-23, 89 Jefferts Place, Brooklyn, NY (Res.)  
Free lance writer at residence  
100-41674-36Searched  
Serialized  
Indexed  
FiledALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 12/22/82 BY 289882

WRIGHT, R. 76

208

**Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice  
New York 7, New York**

June 18, 1946

MEMO

RE: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT;  
SECURITY MATTER - C

The records of Selective Service Board #178, 44 Court Street, Brooklyn, reflected that as of March 21, 1946, the subject's address was apartment 3F, 82 Washington Place, New York City.

In view of this fact it is suggested that a Security Index Card be appropriately changed and the Bureau advised.

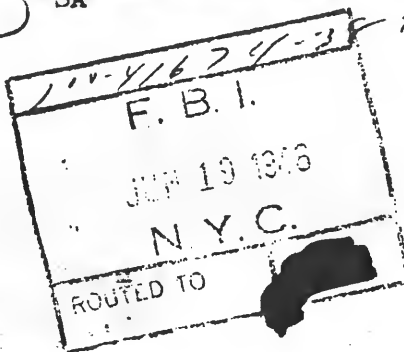
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DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1A/BSC

SA



100-41674

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WRIGHT, R. 77

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XXXXXXFEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
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2 Page(s) withheld entirely at this location in the file. One or more of the following statements, where indicated, explain this deletion.

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WRIGHT, R. 78

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X NO DUPLICATION FEE X  
X FOR THIS PAGE X  
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## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SAC, New York

FROM : Director, FBI

SUBJECT: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT;  
SECURITY MATTER - C  
Your File 100-41674

DATE: February 3, 1948

MR. SCHEIDT
MR. BELMONT
MR. WYATT
MR. TROTT
MR. LADD
MR. CLEGG
MR. GLAVIN
MR. HARBO
MR. MOHR
MR. NICHOLS
MR. ROSEN
MR. TRACY
MR. Egan
MR. Gurnea
MR. Hendon
MR. Pennington
MR. Quinn
MR. Nease
Miss Gandy

*Send file  
#7*

In accordance with your recommendation, the Security Index Card relative to the captioned individual has been cancelled and you are authorized to place your copy thereof in the investigative case file.

100-157464

*See 1a7  
m. 8.*

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DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 AG/SC

FEB 4 1948
N. Y. C.
ROUTED TO
FILE

*676*

100-41674-77

WRIGHT, R 79

Director, FBI

February 11, 1960

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b7C  
per  
Arm

Subject WRIGHT, according to this report, resides at 14 rue Monsieur le Prince, Paris 6.

The following information was set forth in the above-referenced U. S. Army report:

"In December 1951, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] stated that Richard WRIGHT is active in the French Communist Party and has been engaged in spreading communist doctrine through the

b7C  
per  
Arm

-2-

WRIGHT, R. 43

170



Director, FBI

February 11, 1960

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

FAFG. Mrs. Richard WRIGHT is the active communist member of the family and has made a point of 'insulting Negro personnel who hold views other than communist.' Two acquaintances of Source who had attended some meetings stated that as far as they had been able to discover, the FAFG was devoting all of its time to very uncontrolled discussion of the things that were 'wrong with the US.' Source stated that WRIGHT had boasted that he had 'the State Department in my pocket--they call me in for conferences, the fools.' (u)

of  
Wright  
for  
her  
Mey  
W  
Don  
Pepf

"In January 1952, an American Negro male student then attending the University of Paris stated that in about June or July 1950, Richard WRIGHT asked Source to join a 'protest' group aimed at 'forcing the employment of more of the Americans of African ancestry' in US government jobs in Paris. Source told WRIGHT that it would be better to be certain of facts before 'going off half-cocked.' WRIGHT then accused Source of having an 'Uncle Tom attitude.' Later the organization tried to interfere with the French policy of employment and held protest meetings at which the members discussed the fact that Algerians, Africans, and French colonials were not employed in other than menial capacities in Paris." (u)

The above data is being furnished to the Bureau and the New York Office for purposes of information and possible interest.

No further action is being taken in this matter but in the event pertinent information is received in the future on captioned subject, it will be furnished to the Bureau and NYO.

RUC.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

## Central Research Section

# Richard Wright, Novelist, Author of 'Native Son'

PARIS, Nov. 30 (AP). — Richard Wright, the Negro author, died of a heart attack Monday night.

The Mississippi-born writer, a longtime Paris resident, is best known for his novels such as "Black Boy" and "The Outsider" dealing with the problems of the Negro in American society.

Mr. Wright, 52, who had suffered recently from intestinal trouble, was hospitalized Saturday for treatment.

Mr. Wright's latest work dealt with a theme he spent a lifetime exploring. Titled "Fishbelly," the book traces the impact of American racial attitudes upon the Negro.

Mr. Wright was born near Natchez, Miss., on September 4, 1908. He attended a Seventh Day Adventist school near his home but quit and went to

work in Memphis, Tenn., at the age of 15.

He did his first writing during the depression under the auspices of the Federal Writers Project, first in Chicago in 1935 and then in New York in 1937.

Mr. Wright began contributing articles and stories to small literary magazines and to the Daily Worker and New Masses, both Communist publications. He first attracted national attention with "Uncle Tom's Children" in 1939.

"Native Son," published in 1940, established him as one of the foremost American contemporary authors.

Mr. Wright was identified by a Government investigation witness in 1952 as a former Communist who broke with the party.

Tolson \_\_\_\_\_  
Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
Parsons \_\_\_\_\_  
Belmont \_\_\_\_\_  
Callahan \_\_\_\_\_  
DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_  
Malone \_\_\_\_\_  
McGuire \_\_\_\_\_  
Rosen \_\_\_\_\_  
Tamm \_\_\_\_\_  
Trotter \_\_\_\_\_  
W.C. Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_  
Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_  
Ingram \_\_\_\_\_  
Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 8-25-81 BY SP8 BTG/bue

The Washington Post and Times Herald \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
The Evening Star BS \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Herald Tribune \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Journal-American \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Mirror \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Post \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Worker \_\_\_\_\_  
The New Leader \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
Date 11/30/70

50 DEC 5 1960

100-157464-A  
NOT RECORDED  
149 DEC 2 1960

WRIGHT, R. 45



EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Paris 8, France

*dup*  
Date: December 7, 1960  
To: Director, FBI (100-157464)  
From: Legat, Paris (100-697)  
Subject: RICHARD WRIGHT  
SM - C

Re Paris letter 2/11/60.

Enclosed is a clipping from the 11/30/60 issue  
of the "New York Herald Tribune", European Edition, Paris,  
reflecting the death of the subject at Paris on 11/28/60. (X)

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WRIGHT, R. 46

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# From 'The God That Failed'

## WHY I QUIT COMMUNISM

By Richard Wright

The Communist Party fraction in the John Reed Club in Chicago instructed me to ask my party cell—"unit," as it was called—to assign me to full duty in the work of the club. I was instructed to give my unit a report of my activities, writing, organizing, speaking. I agreed and wrote the report.

I went to my first unit meeting—which was held in the Black Belt of the South Side—and introduced myself to the Negro organizer.

"Welcome, comrade," he said, grinning. "We're glad to have a writer with us."

The time came for me to make my report, and I took out my notes and told them how I had come to join the Party, what few stray items I had published, what my duties were in the John Reed Club.

I finished, and waited for comment. There was silence. I looked about. Most of the comrades sat with bowed heads. Then I was surprised to catch a twitching smile on the lips of a Negro woman. Minutes passed. The Negro woman lifted her head and looked at the organizer. The organizer smothered a smile. Then the woman broke into unrestrained laughter, bending forward and burying her face in her hands. I stared. Had I said something funny?

During the following days, I learned through discreet questioning that I seemed a fantastic element to the black Communists. I was shocked to hear that I, who had been only to grammar school, had been classified as an INTELLECTUAL.

I learned, to my dismay, that the black Communists in my unit had commented upon my shined shoes, my clean skirt, and the tie that I had worn. Above all, my manner of speech had seemed an alien thing to them.

"He talks like a book," one of the Negro comrades had said. And that was enough to condemn me forever as bourgeois.

**PARTY DUTIES BROKE** into my efforts at expression. The club decided upon a conference of all the Left-Wing writers of the Middle West. I supported the idea and argued that the conference should deal with craft problems. My arguments were rejected. The conference, the club felt, was a political definition of writers—books or political activity. Both, was the answer. Write a few hours a day and march on the picket line the other hours.

The conference convened with a leading Communist attending as adviser. The question debated was: What does the Communist Party expect from the club? The answer of the Communist leader



RICHARD WRIGHT  
The Names They Called Him!

ran from organizing to writing novels. I argued that either a man organized or he wrote novels. The Party leader said that both must be done. The attitude of the Party leader prevailed and Left Front, for which I had worked so long, was voted out of existence.

The ideas I had expounded at the conference were linked with the suspicions I had roused among the Negro Communists on the South Side, and the Communist Party was now certain that it had a dangerous enemy in its midst. It was whispered that I was trying to lead a secret group in opposition to the Party. I had learned that denial of accusations was useless. It was now painful to meet a Communist, for I did not know what his attitude would be.

**I AVOIDED UNIT MEETINGS** for fear of being subjected to discipline. Occasionally, a Negro Communist—defying the code that enjoined him to shun suspects—came to my home

and informed me of the current charges that Communists were bringing against one another. To my astonishment I heard that Buddy Neelson had branded me a "smuggler of reaction."

Buddy Neelson was the Negro who had formulated the Communist position for the American Negro; he had made speeches in the Kremlin; he had spoken for Stalin himself.

"Why does Neelson call me that?" I asked.

"He says that you are a bourgeois degenerate," I was told.

"What does that mean?"

"He says that you are organizing the Party with your ideas."

I sought an appointment with Buddy Neelson. He was a short, black man with an ever ready smile, thick lips, a furtive glower, and a greasy, sweaty face. He suffered from asthma and would snort at unexpected intervals.

"They tell me you write."

"I try to," I said.

"You can write," he snorted.

I read that article you wrote for the New Masses about Joe Louis. Good stuff. First political treatment of sports we've yet had. Haha."

I waited. "Dick," he began, "we're short of forces. We're facing a grave crisis."

"The Party's always facing a crisis," I said.

His smile left and he stared at me.

"You're not cynical, are you, Dick?" he asked.

"No," I said. "But it's the truth! Each week, each month, there's a crisis."

"You're a funny guy," he said, laughing snorting again. "But we've a job to do. We're alerting our work. Fascism's the danger, the danger to all people."

"I understand," I said.

"We've got to defeat the Fascists," he said, snorting from asthma. "We've discussed you and know your abilities. We want you to work with us. We've got to crash out of our narrow way of working and get our message to the church people, students, club people, professionals, middle class."

"I don't know if I fit into things," I said openly.

"We want to trust you with an important assignment," he said.

"What do you want me to do?"

"We want you to organize a committee against the high cost of living."

I was in the midst of writing a novel and he was calling me from it to tabulate the price of groceries.

"Comrade Neelson," I said, "a writer who hasn't written anything worth while is a most doubtful person. Now, I'm in that category. Yet I think I can write. I don't want to ask for special favors, but I'm in the midst of a book which I hope to complete in six months or so. Let me convince myself that I'm wrong about my hankering to write and then I'll be with you all the way."

"Dick," he said, turning in his chair and waving his hand as though to brush away an insect that was annoying him, "you've got to get to the masses of people."

"Dick," he spoke seriously now, "the Party has decided that you are to accept this task."

I went out, angry with myself, angry with him, angry with the Party. Well, I had not broken the decision, but neither had I accepted it wholly.

**I ATTENDED THE NEXT** unit meeting and asked for a place on the agenda, which

### The Author

Richard Wright was born in 1908 on a plantation 25 miles from Natchez, Miss.; of poor Negro parents. Deserted by his father, his mother, a washer woman brought him up. At 11 he left home and worked for two years in Memphis, where he read H. L. Menckens' "Book of Prefaces" and decided to become a writer. With \$15 in his pocket he went to Chicago and earned his living by odd jobs until the depression put him out of work.

His books are: "Uncle Tom's Children" (short stories), "Bigger Was Born," "Native Son" and "Black Boy."

was readily granted. When it came to speak, I said:

"Comrades, for the past ten years I've worked daily with me of you. Despite this, I have in some time found myself in a difficult position in the Party. What caused this difficulty is a long story which I do not care to cite now; it would serve no purpose. But I tell you honestly that I think I've found a solution of my difficulty. I am proposing here tonight that my membership be dropped from the Party rolls."

No ideological differences helped me to say this. I simply not wish to be bound any longer by the Party's decisions. I should like to retain my membership in those organizations in which the Party has influence, and I shall comply with the Party's program in those organizations. I hope that my words will be accepted in the spirit in which they are said. Perhaps sometime in the future I can meet and talk with the leaders of the Party as to what tasks I can best perform.

I sat down amid a profound silence.

Is there any discussion Comrade Wright's statement the secretary asked finally.

I move that discussion Wright's statement be deferred.

Neelson said.

The next night two Negro Communists called at my home. They pretended to be ignorant of what had happened at the last meeting. Patiently, I explained what had occurred.

"Your story does not agree with what Neelson says," I said.

"And what does Neelson say?" I asked.

"He says that you are in league with a Trotskyite group, and that you made an appeal for Party members to follow you leaving the Party."

Perhaps, since I was leaving the Party, I thought, out of my feelings I could spark into this darkness. I try, not because I wanted to, because I felt that I had to were to live at all.

I would hurl words into darkness and wait for an echo, if an echo sounded, no matter how faintly, I would use other words to tell, to march, to fight, to create a sense of hunger for life that gnaws at all, to keep alive in the heart sense of the inexpressible hum.

From the book **THE GOD THAT FAILED**. Copyright 1940 by Richard Wright. Published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

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Internal Security - Subversive

SEP 25 1950

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Ref & Home News

JUL 13 1950

DIVISION

INDEXED - 127

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WRIGHT, R. 51

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SAC, NEW YORK


August 5, 1944

SAC, WASHINGTON

RICHARD WRIGHT  
SECURITY MATTER - C

It has come to the attention of this office that an article written by the above-named subject appears in the August issue of the Atlantic Monthly magazine. It is said that this article relates WRIGHT's joining the Communist Party and his subsequent resignation from it. In this connection, it has also been noted that in the column "The World Today," by GEORGE S. SCHUYLER, appearing in the August 5, 1944, edition of the Pittsburgh Courier, there are two paragraphs with regard to WRIGHT's article in the Atlantic Monthly.

This information is being furnished to you for whatever value it may have and a clipping from the Pittsburgh Courier, as mentioned above, is being enclosed for your further information.

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Encl. Sent *can*

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WRIGHT, R. 57

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## Negro Author Criticizes Reds As Intolerant

Wright, Discussing His Own  
Break With Communists,  
Says Party Fears New Ideas

The Communist position on the American Negro has undergone a "distinct and lamentable regression" in recent years, Richard Wright, Negro author and former party member, said here yesterday in describing Communists as "narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own."

Mr. Wright's remarks were prompted by questions growing out of an article which he has written for "The Atlantic Monthly" for August under the title of "I Tried to Be a Communist."

In this article, the author of "Native Son" and other books discusses his earliest experiences as a Communist party member in Chicago, touching on the problems he faced in trying to present his own ideas to the party.

The August "Atlantic Monthly" describes the article as the first of two installments and Mr. Wright said yesterday that he would not discuss the specific details of his Chicago break with the Communists because these will be covered in the second magazine article.

Mr. Wright said that his Communist party membership covered the period, roughly, from the latter part of 1932 or early 1933 to 1940. His early association with the Communists in Chicago, he said, was broken in 1937, when he was "ejected" from the party.

He remained with the party until August, 1940, when he was "ejected" from the party. He was reinstated in New York in 1937 and "maintained a relationship" with the party until 1940 when, he said, he left the party.

Discussing what he described as the "lamentable regression" in the Communist party position on the American Negro, Mr. Wright said that he does not know the reason for this.

"Publicly," he said, "Communists will deny that there is any substantial change in their militancy but privately they offer any handy excuse. The militancy on the Negro question has passed into the hands of right-wing Negroes. That was not true eight years ago. Most of the battles then were led by Communists."

In answer to the question as to what caused the Chicago rift between him and the Communists, Mr. Wright said:

"It was an accumulation of many things—not so much a leaving as an ejection over a difference of opinion. I had my way of expressing my conception of Negro experience in my writing. I thought it would be of value to them. They had their ideas of how I should react as a Communist. There was an irreconcilable gap between our attitudes."

Mr. Wright said that "I do not regard the Communists today as effective instruments for social change" and observed that "the Communists have a terrible lot to learn about people."

"Communists," he added, "peculiarly are too much the victims of the very society they are trying to change. This too often finds expression in intolerance and narrowness. I mean, general intolerance, in an imperious way of working."

"What it amounts to is that they are narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own. Whether these ideas are right or wrong."

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100-41674-17
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JULY 27 1944
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CLIPPING FROM

NEW YORK HERALD  
DATED 7-28-44  
FORWARDED BY N.Y.

WRIGHT, R. 64

194



Richard Nathaniel Wright

NEW YORK

## Negro Author Criticizes Reds As Intolerant

Wright, Discussing His Own Break With Communists, Says Party Fears New Ideas

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On the day with the party from about May until August, 1937, Mr. Wright said that he was "ejected" from the party in 1937 and "maintained a relationship" with the party until 1940 when, he said, he left the party.

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New York Herald Tribune  
July 28, 1944

WRIGHT, R. 65

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## Reds All Wrong, Wright Quits 'Em

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It took a long time for Richard Wright, the Negro writer, to learn his lesson.

Where, until recently, he was one of the high priests of the Communist Party staunchly defending Red ideology as the only possible political philosophy for his race, today he was hurling epithets at his former Communist comrades.

"Bigoted! Intolerant! Narrow-minded!" were a few of the choicest labels applied to all Communists by the author of "Native Son" and other books.

### REDS LIVE A LIE.

Wright's abrupt about-face from the left to the right was revealed in an article written for the August "Atlantic Monthly" under the title of "I Tried to Be a Communist."

Elaborating on the article Wright discussed why he "took a walk" on the Communist Party back in 1940 after discovering that the Reds live a lie to their ideals.

At the same time Wright advised all members of his race to take a walk with him.

### "HAVE LOT TO LEARN."

"I do not regard the Communists today as effective instruments for social change," Wright said. "The Communists have a terrible lot to learn about people."

"Communists peculiarly are too much the victims of the very society they are trying to change. This too often finds expression in intolerance and narrowness. And I mean general intolerance in an imperious way of working."

"What it amounts to is that they are narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own, whether these ideas are right or wrong."

Wright got an idea of what Communists think of "racial equality" in 1935 when he attended a Communist party writers' congress in Carnegie Hall. Wright had come on from Chicago by hitchhiking with several members of his race.

"I asked about housing accommodations and all white members of the Communist Party looked embarrassed," he said.

One of the white Communists went out and returned "frantic-eyed and sweating" to announce he had had no luck.

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WRIGHT, R. 68

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# Broadway

AUGUST 28, 1944

By DANTON WALKER

## The Home Front

General Douglas MacArthur is in line for a Cabinet post (probably Secretary of War) if F. D. R. gets his Fourth Term. . . . Vice President Wallace, due to start actively campaigning for Roosevelt next month, will be rewarded with the No. 1 food job of the world, as head of a commission to create a permanent United Nations relief setup. . . . Anna Roosevelt Boettiger may become



Jon Hall

official secretary for her father; even now, those who formerly approached Harry Hopkins for Presidential favors must now see Mrs. Boettiger. . . . James Byrnes, the "Assistant President," will quit his war mobilization post after the election and accept a \$100,000 job with Ben Co-



Anna Boettiger

hen's law firm. . . . France will get an Ambassador from the U. S. some time next month, and Norman Armour is highest on the list of candidates at present. . . . Diplomatic Rumor of the Week is that Hitler has been out of Germany since Aug. 1, and a double will soon oblige by being assassinated. . . . Lloyd's of London now offers 6 to 5 that Germany surrenders unconditionally before Oct. 31.

Donald Nelson's mission to China is to iron out differences between Allied chieftains in that sector. Upon his return he will be groomed to replace a prominent New Dealer, now out of favor. . . . Mme. Kung, wife of the Minister of Finance, is now the most influential lady in China. . . . Col. Carlos P. Romulo, Pulitzer Prize winner, is due to succeed Joaquin Miguel Elizalde as Resident Commissioner of the Philippines. . . . Judge Juvenal, Marchisio, who has been loaned by the local Domestic Relations Court to American Relief for Italy, departs for Rome shortly. . . . The present United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration is on the verge of liquidation. . . . On the heels of the liberation of France, a new French Purchasing Commission will buy \$200,000,000 worth of supplies in this country. . . . Another by-product of France's release will be an outbreak of Broadway musical comedies with a Paris background. . . . Washington has proof of secret Nazi war prisoner camps where thousands are held, without possibility of outside relief.

Sidney Hillman is due to be given the air by F. D. R. "right after the election," according to a prominent Chicago Democrat whose entire political future depends on a Fourth Term. . . . Richard Wright, author of "Native Son," has started an uproar with his two-part serial in the Atlantic Monthly called "I Tried to Be a Communist." . . . Plan for a Federation of Catholic States of Europe, with the okay of Stalin and Churchill, has been submitted to the Pope. . . . William Bullitt is said to be the unofficial liaison officer for communications between Vatican City and Moscow. . . . Dr. Floyd Black, president of the American College of Istanbul, played an important role in negotiations for Bulgaria's withdrawal from the war. . . . Brig. Gen. William O'Dwyer, now in Italy, notifies New York friends that he'll retire from politics when his terms as Brooklyn District Attorney is over. . . . Lieut. Dave Hopkins, son of Harry, is back here for a new assignment.

N.Y. Daily News.  
8/28/44

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F. B. I.
AUG 30 1944
N. Y. C.
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WRIGHT, R. 69

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# A DISSERVICE TO THE NEGRO PEOPLE

Richard Wright, author of the popular novel, *Native Son*, has written the articles for the Atlantic Monthly entitled, "I Tried to Be a Communist." I have just finished reading these articles. They are a conglomeration of anti-Communist and anti-Semitic, hidden behind the cry that the Negro people stood in the way of his creative writing. They are also against the interest of the Negro people and they reveal a lack of understanding of social problems. Referring to a time when he was called upon to accept an assignment to head a committee against the high cost of living, Wright says:



"I was in the midst of writing a novel and he (the Communist) was calling me from it to tabulate the price of groceries. . . . I gritted my teeth as the daily value of pork chops was tabulated, longing to be at home with my writing."

This clearly reveals Wright's whole outlook and attitude.

Wright's shameful manner of writing about Negroes is disgusting and damaging to their dignity. He refers to his failure to organize a theatre among Negro actors in Chicago. These actors, sensing how the dignity of Negroes should be upheld, protested against one play Wright submitted. Referring to this incident, Wright says, " . . . a delegation of Negro men came to my office and took out their pocketknives and flashed them in my face." Wright, expressing contempt for these Negro actors, hides behind what he terms Communist inspired actions against him.

## CARICATURE

Wright caricatures Negroes, whether in the Communist movement or outside, as if they were children.

But what Wright has done is a bad turn to the Negro people. Objectively it is an act to isolate and divert them from their best allies in the labor and progressive movement. If it had not been for the Communist Party and the progressive labor movement and the militancy and the fortitude of the Negro people, where would the Negro people be today?

I recall a similar circumstance

with Wright, like the one he complains about in Chicago. It was in Harlem in the days of the unemployed struggle. I was secretary of the Harlem Division of the Communist Party. Wright was a reporter for the Daily Worker assigned to Harlem to write about the problems of the people. We were in the midst of serious struggles of the unemployed.

## CENTER OF STRUGGLES

The Communists of Harlem were in the center of these struggles trying to organize them. We wanted Wright to aid these struggles with his writings. We sought to put him to writing about pork chops, high rents, crowded houses, child welfare and relief. Wright was dissatisfied with this assignment. He hid it, however. But he complained to a number of people, never to our committee directly, that he did not want to write for the Daily Worker.

This revealed again a fundamental weakness in Wright. Not having previously had direct contact with mass struggles, this work could have equipped him still more for creative writing, which the Communists did not want to stifle but to aid!

He did not understand that writing for the Daily Worker would have afforded him a broad platform to reach masses of people. It showed failure on his part to grasp the role of an artist to serve effectively the interests of the people by writing about their problems, inspiring them and helping them to better prepare and organize their struggles.

## N. Y. EXPERIENCE

The explanation of this weakness is that Wright never identified himself with his people. He preferred to be aloof from them, isolated from them and left alone "at home with his writing."

It seems strange that Wright in his Atlantic Monthly articles did not mention his experiences in New York when he was known and respected in the Communist Party and his honest personal appreciation of him.

I understand the two articles which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly were taken from a book, *Learning to Live*. I have not read this book and do not know whether or not he does mention his New York experiences there. There were certainly a number of significant incidents here that could throw more light on Wright's charges. That is why the absence of them in these two articles seems so strange to me.

From my knowledge I know that the cry that the Communists tried to hold him down is not what prompted Wright to do what he did.

Reading Wright's articles in the Atlantic Monthly, no fair-minded person could lay them aside feeling that Wright has made a case of himself, unless it is a rationalization of his own weaknesses. A few things are clear. What Wright did is like making a bargain to get into the good graces of those who have an anti-Communist axe to grind.

Does Wright think that the highest achievements of the artist is the Westbrook Pegler type of red-baiting, labor-baiting, Negro-baiting and anti-Semitic slanders?

Now we are faced with a crucial election when the Negro people are trying to choose between progress and reaction. There are people who are trying to confuse and divide the people. Wright's act fits right into this pattern. But the Negro people are discerning and they will repudiate these methods as they have done in the past.

CLIPPING FROM THE  
DAILY WORKER

DATED SEP 5 1944  
FORWARDED BY N. Y. DIVISION

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WRIGHT, R. 70

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CONFIDENTIAL

REQUEST INFORMATION FROM THE F.B.I., N.Y., ON THE FOLLOWING:

FILE NO: 296513

SECTION: DISAFFECTION

DATE: 9 Oct 1944

NAME AND ALIASES: WRIGHT, RICHARD H.

HOME ADDRESSES (for the past three yrs.): (?) Lefferts Place Bklyn NY;

BUSINESS ADDRESS (for the past three yrs.): Author of "Native Son"

Contributor "New Masses"; Daily Worker; Spencer Writers School 362 4th Ave NYC

EMPLOYED BY:

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ BORN: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION: COLOR: C HEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_ WEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_ EYES: \_\_\_\_\_ HAIR: \_\_\_\_\_

REMARKS: (Include any other data that will assist in identifying person.)

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HEADQUARTERS SECOND SERVICE COMMAND  
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR, SEC. & INTEL. DIV.  
GOVERNORS ISLAND, N.Y.

FOR USE OF F.B.I.

REFERENCE:

100-41674

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Information reflected in  
files furnished to:

A. E. Allen

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DATE

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5 Oct 44

BY

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FORM #13

IMMEDIATE ACTION

OCT 5 1944

WRIGHT, R. 71

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WRIGHT, R. &amp; D

New York, New York  
November 3, 1950

MEMO:

RE: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT  
SM - C

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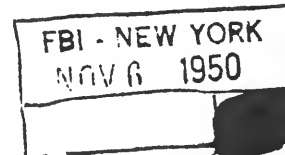
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☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:

NY 100-41674-57

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WRIGHT, R. 82

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
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WRIGHT, R. 83

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THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
American Embassy  
Paris 8, France

Date: November 21, 1958  
To: Director, FBI  
From: Legat, Paris (100-697)  
Subject: RICHARD WRIGHT  
SECURITY MATTER - C

Re Paris letter 10/29/58. ✓

[REDACTED]

RUC.

2 - Bureau  
1 - Paris  
CM  
(3)

Classified by 2640  
Exempt from GDS Category 1  
Date of Declassification Indefinite

AGENCY CC-Huf  
REQ REC'D  
DATE FORW 10-8-58  
HOW FORW 1-2-59  
BY [REDACTED]

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) ON 2640 by [REDACTED]  
DATE 6-9-77

RECEIVED  
117

DEC 2 1 52 PM '58

CLASS. & EXT. BY: 508B/1/6/2  
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2.4.2  
DATE OF REVIEW... 8-35-91  
F-25-81

100-151464-

11 DEC 2 1958

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

NOV 35 1 34 PM '58

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) ON  
DATE 10-2-87

BOUCH MAIR

SUBV. CONTROL

WRIGHT, R. 84



THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
American Embassy  
Paris 8, France

Date: October 29, 1958  
To: Director, FBI  
From: Legat, Paris (100-697)  
Subject: RICHARD WRIGHT  
SECURITY MATTER - C

Re Paris letter 8/21/58. ✓

[REDACTED]

P.

2 - Bureau  
1 - Paris  
[REDACTED]:CM  
(3)

88615/16  
8-25-63  
8-25-61

Classified by 1040  
Exempt from GDS Category 1  
Date of Declassification Indefinite  
6-9-77

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF  
DATE 6-9-77

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

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100 - 157464 - 44  
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11-10-58  
DATE FORW  
HOW FORW  
BY

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF  
DATE 10-21-81

SUBV CONTROL

WRIGHT, R. 85

b7c

164



THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
American Embassy  
Paris 8, France

*Jan*

Date: August 21, 1958  
To: Director, FBI  
From: Legal Attache, Paris (100-697)  
Subject: RICHARD WRIGHT  
SECURITY MATTER - C

*ROL  
6-7-58*

*11-1*

Re Paris let 7/7/58.

[REDACTED]

*b1  
b7c*

P

2 - Bureau  
1 - Paris  
(3) AM  
Classified from Category 1  
Exempt from Declassification Indefinite  
Date of Declassification Indefinite  
*6-9-77*

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF *2041*  
DATE *6-9-77*

*1cc - NY by 8/5 (0-25)  
9-3-58*

CLASS. & EXT. BY *SP8 BTJ/KAC*  
FPM 101-10111, 1242  
DATE OF REVIEW *8-25-81*

28 5 5 11 6H.28  
SUBVERSIVE CONTROL  
REC.D BT. EX-135

REC-93

*100-157464-43*

13 AUG 26 1958

52 SEP 4 1958

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF *class*  
DATE *10-21-81*

WRIGHT, R. 86

*163*



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

United States Department of Justice  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

~~SECRET~~

Washington, D. C.  
July 7, 1958

CLASS. & EXT. BY *SP8 BJA*  
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2.4.2  
DATE OF REVIEW *8-25-81* RICHARD WRIGHT

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

*b1  
b7D*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] S

[REDACTED] S

[REDACTED] S

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) *2040 by JH*  
DATE *6-9-77*

*2040*  
Exempt from GDS Category 1  
Date of Declassification Indefinite  
*ARC-6-9-77*

*cc - State by (0-14 h)  
CIA by (0-14 h)  
ACSI by (0-14 h)  
NY by (0-25)*

AGENCY  
REQ. REC'D  
DATE FORW. *7-22-58*  
HOW FORW. *R/S*  
BY *[Signature]*

*BT*

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
ENCLOSURE

~~SECRET~~

*7/10*

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) *Class*  
DATE *10-21-81*

WRIGHT, R. 87

*162*



THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
American Embassy  
Paris 8, France

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

Date: July 7, 1958  
To: Director, FBI  
From: Legat, Paris (100-697)  
Subject: RICHARD WRIGHT  
SECURITY MATTER - C

CLASS. & EXT. BY: SP-8 J. J. [unclear]  
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2.4.2  
DATE OF REVIEW: 8-25-81

Re Paris letter 6/26/58. J

[REDACTED]

Any additional information coming to the attention  
of this office concerning the subject will be forwarded to  
the Bureau. J

One extra copy of this letter is provided for trans-  
mittal to New York, office of origin. J

P.

Enclosures - 5

18  
APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF 2040 by JMC  
DATE 6-9-77

72040  
GDS Category 1  
Classification Indefinite  
JMC 6-9-77

1cc - NY by H/c (1-25)  
7-22-58

REC-42

100 157464-42

15 JUL 14 1958

5 ENCLOSURE

REC-42 1-9-67

2 Xerox made, sent to  
Legat, Paris with Paris At.  
12-19-66. /ac [REDACTED]

SUBV CONTROL

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF 1-9-67  
DATE 10-21-81

WRIGHT, R. SP

67 JUL 22 1958

b7c





THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

American Embassy  
Paris 8, France

~~SECRET~~

48

Date: June 26, 1958  
To: Director, FBI  
From: Legal Attache, Paris (100-697)  
Subject: RICHARD WRIGHT  
SECURITY MATTER - C

f 11-1

ROL  
5/7/73

Re Washington Field Office let to Bureau 4/4/58.

[REDACTED]

b1  
b2  
5

P

b7c

:AM  
(5)

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF  
DATE 10-21-81

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF  
DATE 10-21-81  
EXEMPT  
Date of Declassification Indefinite  
6-9-77

CLASS. & EXT. BY... SP1 A/BCE  
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2.4.2...  
DATE OF REVIEW... 8-25-81

EX-124

100-157464-1  
7-7-58

b7c

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

REC-74

100-157464-1

52 JUL 8 1958

WRIGHT, R. 89

~~SECRET~~

160

157464 ✓

May 29, 1958

b7c

ADMIN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

TO: SACS, NEW YORK  
CHICAGO

FROM: DIRECTOR, FBI

CLASS. & EXT. BY  
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2.4.2  
DATE OF REVIEW

SP8 BTG/bce  
3-25-81  
P. 25-81

INTERNAL SECURITY - C  
SMITH ACT OF 1940

b2, b7c

Re CG airtel May 26, 1958, requesting that the Bureau authorize NY to contact Richard Wright concerning his possible knowledge of [redacted]

A review of Bufiles reflects that Wright, on February 13, 1958, executed an application for passport at Paris, France, on which he stated that he has resided outside of the U. S. since September, 1949, and that his date of returning to the U. S. is indefinite. On February 28, 1958, the Department of State authorized the issuance of a passport to Wright.

[redacted]

100-157464 (Wright)

CONFIDENTIAL

:pat

b7c

CONFIDENTIAL

b1  
b7c

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

YELLOW  
DUPLICATE  
MAY 30 1958  
MAILED

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF  
DATE 10-21-81

60 JUN 10 1958

MAIL ROOM ☐

WRIGHT, R. 90

Tolson  
DeLoach  
Mohr  
Bishop  
Casper  
Callahan  
Conrad  
Felt  
Gale  
Rosen  
Sullivan  
Tavel  
Trotter  
Tele. Room  
Holmes  
Gandy

CG [REDACTED]

b2, b7c

Chicago. [REDACTED] the person believed to be  
WRIGHT was highly regarded by [REDACTED]

b7c

Indices of the Chicago Office reflect that  
RICHARD WRIGHT, the author of "Native Son" in 1936 and  
1937 was using the address of Apartment Number 1, 3743 Indiana  
Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

BUREAU

b7c

It is requested that the New York Division be  
permitted to contact RICHARD WRIGHT concerning his possible  
knowledge of [REDACTED]

It is  
particularly desired that information be developed of  
WRIGHT concerning any statements made by [REDACTED]

THE NEW YORK DIVISION

AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Will on receipt of permission from the Bureau,  
interview RICHARD WRIGHT along the lines set out above.

b7c

*Copy*

AIRTEL

*b2, b7c*

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED]  
FROM : SAC, CHICAGO [REDACTED]  
SUBJECT: [REDACTED]  
INTERNAL SECURITY - C;  
SMITH ACT OF 1940

DATE: 5-26-58

*b7c*

ReBulet dated May 2, 1958 entitled "U.S. V. [REDACTED] SMITH ACT MEMBERSHIP RETRIAL)" and New York letter to Bureau May 13, 1958 entitled [REDACTED] IS-C" and my airtel of May 22, 1958.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] RICHARD WRIGHT, the author of "Native Son". [REDACTED] could not place WRIGHT in the CP but recalled [REDACTED] had numerous discussions with person believed to be WRIGHT concerning a manuscript of a publication being prepared by WRIGHT. [REDACTED] the individual believed to be RICHARD WRIGHT was employed at the settlement house at 39th and Langley Avenue, Chicago, Illinois and was connected in some way with the Abraham Lincoln School of

- ③ - Bureau (RM)
- 4 - New York (RM)

(2-100- [REDACTED] RICHARD WRIGHT)  
5 - Chicago [REDACTED]

*b2, b7c*

(1-100-New RICHARD WRIGHT)

[REDACTED] JVK  
(12)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 8-25-81 BY 888 BTJ/bce

*b7c*  
WRIGHT, R. 92

157

WFO 100-15433

On February 13, 1958, RICHARD WRIGHT appeared before AGNES SCHNEIDER, Consul of the United States of America at Paris, France, being duly sworn, stated he was submitting the following statement as part of his application for a passport which he executed on February 13, 1958. In that statement, subject stated he was not then a member of the Communist Party, but had been a member of the Communist Party from 1932 to 1942, and called attention to the statement he had executed at the American Embassy, Paris, France, on September 16, 1954, for further details in that regard.

The Communist Party has been designated by the Attorney General of the United States pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

On September 16, 1954, RICHARD WRIGHT appeared before AGNES SCHNEIDER, Consul of the United States of America at Paris, France, being duly sworn, furnished a statement consisting of answers to questions annexed to his statement. In that statement, subject identified himself as being the same RICHARD WRIGHT whose experiences in the communist movement were included in the book, "The God That Failed." Subject stated he could not fix the exact time of his joining the Communist Party because he was a functionary in the Communist Party before he actually joined the Communist Party. He explained that the method used by the Communist Party in recruiting is of such a nature that the line or date of determining the exact membership is very difficult. He stated that to the best of his recollection, the date (about 1933) shown in his book, "The God That Failed", is correct. Subject stated that he is the RICHARD WRIGHT who wrote a letter to the League of American Writers expressing his views on the Spanish Civil War, which was published in May, 1938, in the booklet, "Writers Take Sides."

The League of American Writers has been designated by the Attorney General of the United States pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

Subject stated at the time of writing the above-mentioned letter he was a member of the Communist Party. He stated he is not now a member of the Communist Party of any country of the world.



WFO 100-15433

Subject stated that he disaffiliated with the Communist Party of the United States sometime during the year 1942, and that his disaffiliation came about because of a series of ideological disputes he had with the following Communist officials: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and others. He stated his decision to break with the Communist Party was predicated upon his disagreement with the Communist Party's position upon the Negro question in the United States. He stated that [REDACTED] at that time urged him to become a member-at-large of the Communist Party, but that he refused to heed that suggestion. Subject stated that two years later, in 1944, he publicly indicated his disaffiliation with the Communist Party by means of a press conference held in the office of his agent in New York, PAUL REYNOLDS, and a few months later he wrote two articles in the "Atlantic Monthly" indicating he was no longer affiliated with the Communist Party.

Subject was asked if he was acquainted with [REDACTED] in the Office of War Information. Subject stated that he has a slight acquaintanceship with [REDACTED] and it dates exactly from the period which he did some voluntary work for the Office of War Information in 1942. He stated he met [REDACTED] in the Office of War Information in 1942, and as he recalls was introduced to [REDACTED] and that this introduction took place in the presence of [REDACTED]. Subject stated that [REDACTED] was known to him as a member of the Communist Party, and he described [REDACTED]

In regard to [REDACTED] subject stated he was not known to him as having any affiliation with the Communist Party at that time. Subject stated he was somewhat surprised and taken back when [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and the manner of his being introduced to him implied that [REDACTED] understood the subject's political position very well. Subject stated that [REDACTED]



[REDACTED] one of the leading communists of the United States, approached him shortly after his introduction to [REDACTED] and asked him to make a formal application to work for the Office of War Information. Subject stated he told them that this would be rather difficult since he was a publicly known communist writer and had been Chief of the Harlem Bureau of the "Daily Worker."

The "Daily Worker" was an East Coast communist newspaper which suspended publication on January 13, 1958.

Subject stated that [REDACTED] informed him that the Communist Party knew exactly what it was doing in asking him to make this move, and that he should forthwith get an application blank [REDACTED] would aid him in filling out the application blank. Subject stated he obtained the application blank and [REDACTED] called at his home, which at that time was at 11 Revere Place, Brooklyn, New York, and they jointly filled out this application. Subject stated the application reflected that he was a member of the Communist Party and objected to the linking of communism with fascism, as the application implied, and indicated that subject was a patriotic person wishing to make a contribution to the war effort. Subject stated he took this application before a Notary Public and swore to the truthfulness of its contents, an act which at the time made him, perhaps, the only sworn Communist in the United States. Subject stated he took this application [REDACTED] the Office of War Information and handed it to them. He stated they read it and had a consultation about it in his sight, but out of reach of his hearing. Subject stated that their comment to him was, "You are really intransigent." Subject stated he returned to his house and waited anxiously for some days to hear from his application, and he began to suspect that they never actually turned it in. He stated he does not know what happened to it, for he never had a reply to that application. Subject stated he consulted with [REDACTED] about why he never heard about his application, and [REDACTED] astounded him in his home in Brooklyn by telling him he had no recollection of having helped subject make out such an application. Subject stated that upon reflection, he realized that the Communist Party had undoubtedly decided he was too well known as a communist to be sponsored for work in the Office of War Information, and they had, therefore, chosen someone else less politically prominent to take the job.